

Washington, D.C. - Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) released the following statement today:

"It is with tremendous sadness that we learn today of the passing of Chairman Tom Lantos – an inspiring colleague and an outspoken champion for human rights around the world. His passing will leave an enormous void in the U.S. House of Representatives where he has served for 28 years and was admired and respected for his strength, leadership and unwavering commitment to democracy and freedom.

"It was my honor to serve for four years as a member of the House International Relations Committee in which Rep. Lantos was my ranking member. He was a mentor and strong leader as a Democrat and as an American. I will miss Tom as a colleague and a friend.

"I extend my heartfelt prayers and condolences to Tom's wife, Annette, who was his constant companion and an inspiration in her own right, along with their two children, seventeen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

"The U.S. House of Representatives and the United States of America has lost a hero and he will be sorrowfully missed."